since the early 1930's. The radiations coming from radioactive cobalt are of the same type as those coming from radium and x-ray tubes. To date no one has proved that there is any curative power in the gamma rays from radium that does not exist in x-rays, and there is no reason to expect that the gamma rays from cobalt will do anything more than the gamma rays from radium. However, for certain tumor sites there may be some technical advantages in using radioactive cobalt rather than radium or high-energy x-rays.

Treatment with cobalt bombs is *not* generally available in this country at present. However, treatment with other types of ray-emitting units, both radium and x-ray, is widely available. Further, radiotherapists with equipment adequate for treating the majority of cases of cancer are at hand in most large American communities today.

In summary, therefore, radioactive cobalt bombs for medical use are still very much in the experimental stage. The type of rays emitted by these bombs does not act on cancer cells in any manner significantly different from that of filtered rays obtained from other more available x-ray and radium sources. Therefore, at least for the present, physicians treating cancer by radiological methods will continue to place major dependence on properly calibrated x-ray and radium therapy apparatus.

LETTERS to the Editor . . .

July 11, 1952

REFERENCE is made to the article by Dr. Frank Hinman, Jr., which appeared in the January 1952 issue of CALIFORNIA MEDICINE.

On page 3 of this article, the following statement appears:

> "Aureomycin, chloramphenicol and Terramycin are similar in antibacterial and other properties. In fact, it may be that chloramphenicol (which has been synthesized) is merely an active portion of the large Terramycin molecule."

The very extensive studies which have been carried out by our chemists have shown that, chemically, Terramycin differs radically from chloramphenicol, nor is the chloramphenicol molecule a component part of the Terramycin molecule. Of particular importance is the fact that Terramycin does not contain a nitrobenzene radical.

We are taking the liberty of bringing these facts to your attention since we are certain that you would not wish to have erroneous information go uncorrected.

Sincerely yours,

W. ALAN WRIGHT, M.D.
Director of Medical Service,
Chas. Pfizer & Co., Inc.

• *Dr. Wright's letter was referred to Dr. Hinman, who replied:*

The detailed chemical pattern of Terramycin had not been published at the time the article was written, and it is now apparent that the two substances are structurally unrelated, especially by the absence of the nitrobenzine radical in Terramycin. This correction is timely since chloramphenicol has very recently received adverse publicity related to aplastic anemia.

FRANK HINMAN, JR., M.D.